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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terry Goddard Warns Consumers About Rebate Scams

(Phoenix, Ariz. – May 12, 2008) With the arrival of federal rebates, Attorney General Terry Goddard today reminded consumers to be suspicious phone calls or emails from people claiming to be from the Internal Revenue Service. The first electronic payments of \$300 to \$600 per person went out earlier this month, and the Internal Revenue Service began mailing paper checks on May 9.

IRS officials have reported consumers receiving postcards announcing "Rebate Credit!" and emails with the IRS logo seeking Social Security and bank account numbers to complete the processing of the rebate payment. Often recipients are led to believe that failing to provide the information will prevent them from receiving their rebate or refund or even cause them to be audited. Email attachments can also contain spyware that enables the thief to steal victims' personal and financial information.

The Attorney General's Office and the IRS encourage you to follow these guidelines to protect yourself from identity thieves:

- The only Internal Revenue Service Web site is www.irs.gov. The governmental rebates are being distributed based on the last two numbers of your Social Security number. Please visit the IRS Web site for the schedule.
- Ignore supposed Internal Revenue Service emails seeking information. The IRS does not send unsolicited tax-related emails to taxpayers and will never ask for personal information (such as Social Security, bank account or PIN numbers) via email. Delete these notes and open no attachments. They might contain a computer virus. Communications seeking bank information are likely efforts to obtain personal data. Rebate payments are automatic.
- Phone calls regarding rebate payments, especially from someone claiming to be from the IRS, are scams. Hang up.

- Watch for bogus checks that appear to be from the IRS. Rebate payments are from the U.S. Treasury.

Report any suspicious calls to the Attorney General's Office at 602-542-5763.

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud, please contact the Attorney General's Office in Phoenix at 602.542.5763; in Tucson at 520.628.6504; or outside the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas at 1.800.352.8431. To file a complaint in person, the Attorney General's Office has 36 satellite offices throughout Arizona with volunteers available to help. Locations and hours are posted on the Attorney General's Web site at www.azag.gov. Please visit the Web site to sign up for scam alerts and weekly messages from Attorney General Goddard.

Individuals with tax-related questions can contact the IRS toll-free at 1-800-829-1040.

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